9/28/68

Dear Dick,

Your theories are fascinating. We all agree on some things but in details we may have other theories. We seem to agree that Ray was a decoy. There could have been a number of Rays, as there were Oswalds. I've told both Sprague and Trent what I've written, told both I'd like to have access to what they may have, and have had no response, so I'll leave it like that. You see I also have what might be of value in considering the validity ofxwhat they have, what might be helpful for them to know. This is one of our problems, and my ulcer and I have learned to live with it, or with most of it. There are a few apsects, meaning people, that trouble me.

From what I know of the people involved in your hunches, I am in accord with your belief and your reasoning - and your evaluation.

There are some of us from whom I have no secrets, some to whom I send almost all my raw materials, because I know they recognize and respect my rights to my own literary proerties. Thus Ix can help them by informing them and they, on occasion, help me with a valuable suggestion and, infrequently, but very helpfully, with something of which I didn't know. It is costly to me to make these copies, and it takes time, but this is thex ideal way to work. I also spend much time writing them, explaining what the significance is of what I send. Some of us are no so constituted. It is perhaps our greatest single operating handicap.

If you know how to get in touch with Abernathy, please do and tell him I have a book written he should read. I wrote King, sent him copies of all my books, and get neither response nor acknowledgement. Everybody sees a tree, but no one is aware of the forrest. I have much more, as one can in a book, and I have some appraisals of the book that exceed my own. One of us, unknown to you, a publicist and a former reporter, says this is the definitive book, the one I'll have least prospect of getting published commercially, the very toughest. Playboxy , which would not consider what I regarded as the very hottest stuff yet and spent a day with me on it, is seriously considering this one. They promised an answer in a week and are still agonizing. They have, after a month, asked for another week. What Trent doesn't recognize is that a single story, helpful as it can be, cannot begin to do what a book can. A book can provide that story and much, much more, and, what a story cannot do, it can provide a context. Hence the title, COUP D'ETAT.

I have the advance predictions of all three murders, descriptions of how two of them would be accomplished. The third is my own, accurate, alas, and made to Bobby and his closest. The stuff Lane has been using is mine, stolen and bastardized to promote his second book. I have three tape-recorded interviews made in Memphis with those who overheard the plot and its accurate forecast, with the names of everyone save the triggerman and a description of him, slight but meaningful. I have the Miami tape and all the suppressed, misfiled, misidentified FBI reports, and much of the missing related data. Other interesting things, too.

Let me add one thing for your appraisal of Dawney. I've told you of his and Joesten's efforts to steal Oswald in New Orleans. I wouldn't stand for it. We did have a written understanding, in letters, prior to this. I said I'd go with that, but no changes. He thereupon, on his own, made changes. So, I withdrew the book from him, electing to forfeit British publication as the alternative. If I have yet to find an honest publisher, I also have yet to adjust to living with open crookedness. I findiit difficult to have faith in the work of such people. I would not trust Dawney, personally, woth anything that I didn't absolutely have to. When I consider Joesten with him, well.....

I have never seen Beckham, though I've known of him for a while and of

Garrison's interest in him and varying beliefs of his function and position. I know where he is not, what he is into, and I have a friend near where he is who is keeping me posted - the kind of guy I like more than those of us who are famous. The man is a poet. He cannot do much, but he is willing and intelligent. Beckham has been arrested for running a diploma mill, in Omaha. I have no knowledge of whether he speaks with an accent (doubt it) or is an addict. My opinion, which is based upon less than it might be, is that he is capable of anything.

My relations with Garrison are not good, for a number of complicated reasons, including both our personalities, their jealousy and the deliberate designs of some people. He has not keep his agreements with me, regularly, and when this involved my pledged word to others, I told him. I have gone there regularly, found what they could not and given it to them, understood what they did not and explained it to them, only to have them ignore or fuck up until I am sick of it. The last time this happened it sickened me, because there was the possibility someone could have gotten killed over it and because what they did cannot on any ground be justified or excused. They blew one of the best leads I had developed by calling someone in for questioning, without me there and knowing I would be there in less than a week, in violation ofxxxx their agreement with me to the contrary, and knowing so little they didn't even know his appearance. Instead of the questioning weakening this fellow, their ignorance and incompetence stiffened him. I got him to come in again and despite this handicap, from him developed a solid link between apparently separate parts of the case! Right in front of their disbelieving eyes, their own ears. So, they did nothing until a duplicate occasion came up, with an even more i portant witness, on whom I had already done really sensational work, developing enough for Jim to jail a bastard when he takes the time. Again, they have no original material, no knowledge save what I have given them of it, which cannot ever be complete and in this case was minimal. This time, with the experience of the past, I have a firm agreement from Jim, personally. I've not heard from him since the day I left. I now find that as of a week ago they had made two unsuccessful efforts to interview this witness without my presence, without even informing me of their intent. I was supposed to be part of all such interviews. They didn't even get me to background them. I can get to interview that witness, without authority, and have already, on tape, interviewed those relevant. The best I can hope for, in the interest of ultimate truth, is that he continues to avoid them and they do not take him before the grand jury. He'll go to jail rather than talk under their terms, to them, and I am not at all certain that I bleme him. His laternatives are frightening. These, however, can be exploitedxxx and he can be protected, to everyones benefit. They cannot even make a good deal with him because they do not know enough about him or who or what he knows. This unhappy background, which is for your information only, is my way of responding to you about Beckham.

Make your own approach. Write not to Jim but to Louis Ivon. Tell him you are a friend of mine, that we work together, and that I have suggested you write him. I'll try and do the same thing. If Louis has anything he considers important, he'll take it up with Jim. He is a very decent, very honorable and conscientious guy, unlike any cop you have ever met. I am personally very fond of him and I trust him, more than anyone else in the office. His problem is time. If he can, he'll help.

I think Gary meant ABC when he said NBC. I've tried to help Sprague there.

I also think the approach to Hanes is wrong.

Best regards,

Harold Weisberg